

# Return to Custody Report One Year Post Release 2010-2015



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## Executive Summary

Recidivism is a standard criminal justice term used in various ways to explain the rate at which released prisoners return to the prison system. The ability to effectively measure recidivism rates in each state allows state correctional departments to look for ways to keep repeat prisoners out of the prison system thus decreasing overall state correctional budgets and increasing public safety. The inherent problem with analyzing recidivism on a national and state level is the fact that differences in definitions and survey methods exist.

Two well-known national reports on recidivism outline these differences; The Pew Charitable Trust (2011) and the U.S. Department of Justice's Bureau of Justice Statistics (BJS) (2002, 2014). The most recent study produced by BJS reported that 49.7% of the released prisoners in their observed timeline returned to prison within three years. The Pew Charitable Trust report tracked more states than the BJS study and reported about 40% of released prisoners returned to prison within three years.

In this report The Maine Department of Corrections (MDOC) establishes a methodology for calculating "recidivism," including using the phrase "Return to Custody" rather than recidivism. By establishing this methodology for measuring Return to Custody, MDOC can begin to report, analyze, discuss, and design policies to address this problem.

The following pages illustrate and explain the rate at which prisoners released in 2010, 2011, 2012, 2013, 2014, and 2015 returned to an MDOC facility within one year of release.



### Return to Custody Introduction & Definition

In January 2017, MDOC began designing a process to analyze the rate at which released prisoners return to the Department's custody. Prior to 2017, the Department contracted with external providers to measure variations of recidivism on specific populations of prisoners. While useful, the process of using an outside vendor to monitor this left the Department limited ability to analyze other factors leading to return to custody.

Establishing a process to monitor and analyze return to custody that is created by the Department is essential in making key policy and practice decisions.

The new process builds off 18 months of improved data collection, data extraction, and data analysis that allows the Department to analyze baseline return to custody rates. In subsequent years, this process will allow the Department to begin measuring the success of its rehabilitative efforts as they relate to prisoners' return to custody, including measurement of the effectiveness of specific programs, treatments, and initiatives. This information will be updated, analyzed and reported annually.

MDOC defines "Return to Custody" as the *release of a prisoner from an MDOC facility followed by a subsequent return of a released prisoner to an MDOC facility, with or without a new criminal conviction.*

### Return to Custody Data Collection

The data for this study was developed by the Department using our prisoner management database, known as CORIS. The data sample was a collection of inmate releases from January 1, 2010 – December 31, 2015. The sample also included a return to custody from January 1, 2010 to December 31, 2016. Inmates released from 2010-2015 were tracked for a return to custody one year post-release, through end of 2016.

The dataset captures two different release scenarios:

Probation Release = Facility to Probation

Straight Release = Facility to Society



## Maine Department of Corrections 2010-2015 Post Release

The dataset was configured and audited for integrity and deemed trustworthy. The data points collected and analyzed include:

Data Point	Definition
Type of Release	Probation or Straight Release
MDOC#	Maine's unique identification number for inmates
Gender	Male or Female
Release Date	Date of Release
Return Date	Date of Return to MDOC Facility
Location Released From	MDOC Facility prisoner released from
Location Released To	Identifies a probation office, or state released to
Custody Level Prior to Release	MDOC has four inmate levels of custody assignments; Close, Medium, Minimum and Community
LSI Score Prior to Release	LSI Score (upon release) is a rating of a prisoner's criminogenic risk while under MDOC supervision
Release Controlling Offense	Most severe (greatest sentence length) offense the prisoner was serving when released
Return to Custody Controlling Offense	Most severe (greatest sentence length) offense the prisoner was sentenced for upon their return to MDOC custody
Return Month	Number of Months elapsed from when an inmate was released from an MDOC facility and when they returned to an MDOC facility
Return to Custody Rate (RCR)	Rate at which released prisoners return to an MDOC facility

The bullets below explain what elements are not included in the Return to Custody dataset:

- Prisoners on probation who entered a MDOC facility during the 2010-2015 time frame who were never previously incarcerated in a MDOC facility
- DOC releases to probation, who were released to society and then convicted of a new crime but served their sentence in a county jail
- MDOC Releases to Supervised Community Confinement Program (SCCP)
- MDOC Releases to Interstate Active Detainer (IAD), Federal Prison



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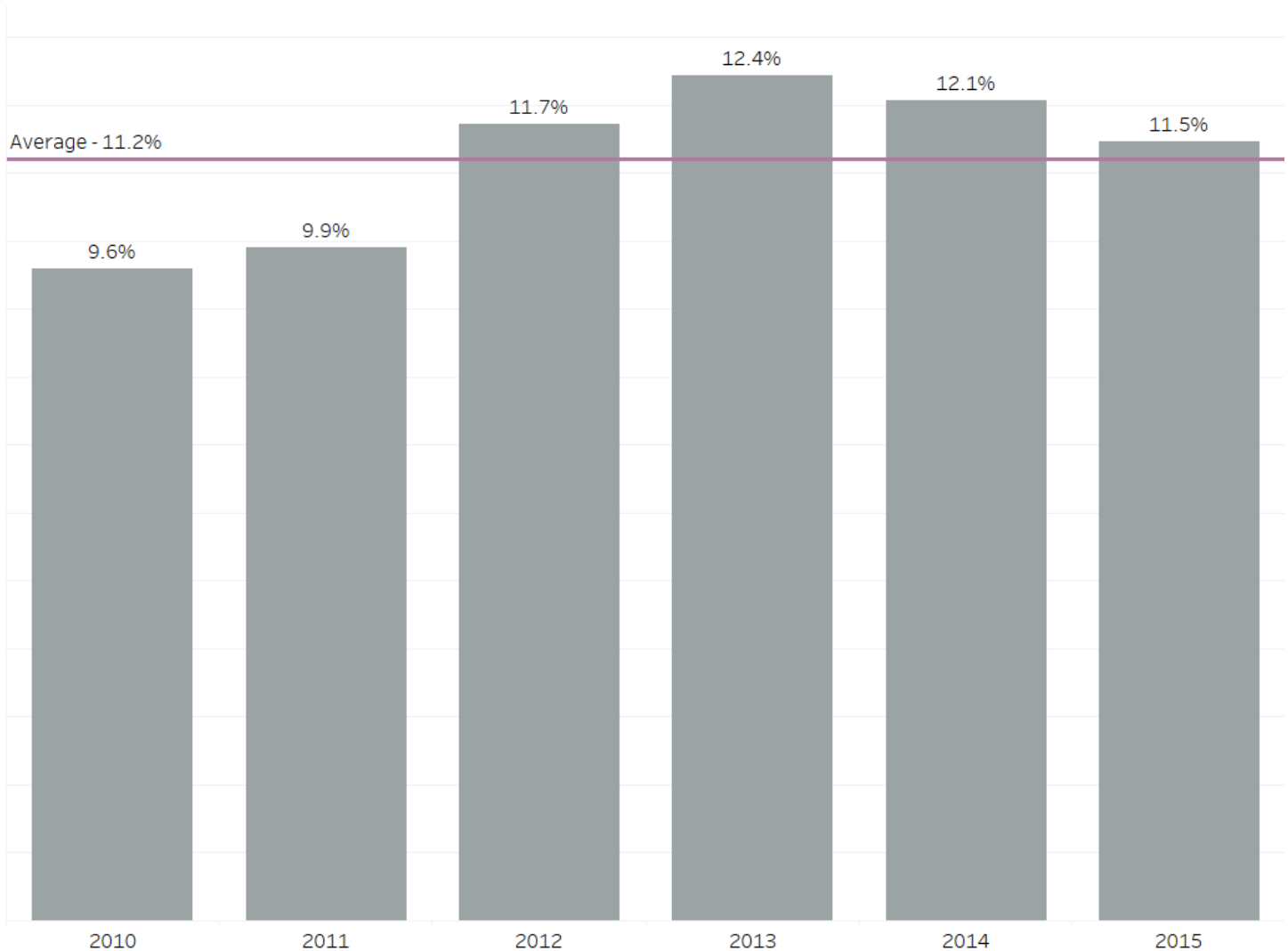
### Return to Custody Rate by Release Year

The chart below represents all releases from a MDOC facility (Probation and Straight Release) between 2010 and 2015, grouped by Release Year.

MDOC Post Release RCR:

- 2010 Release Year – One year RCR – 9.6%
- 2011 Release Year – One year RCR – 9.9%
- 2012 Release Year – One year RCR – 11.7%
- 2013 Release Year – One year RCR – 12.4%
- 2014 Release Year – One year RCR – 12.1%
- 2015 Release Year – One year RCR – 11.5%

The highest one year RCR occurred with 12.4% of the 2013 releases returning within one year. Since 2013 the MDOC one year RCR has decreased to 11.5%. On average 11.2% of the inmates released from 2010-2015 returned to an MDOC facility within one year of their release.





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### Return to Custody by Type of Release

The next several charts depict the RCR for different release types. A Probation Release had a higher RCR than a Straight Release. On average (2010-2015), the Probation Release one year RCR was 15.1%, 8.4% higher when compared to the average Straight Release one year RCR in the same period (6.7%).

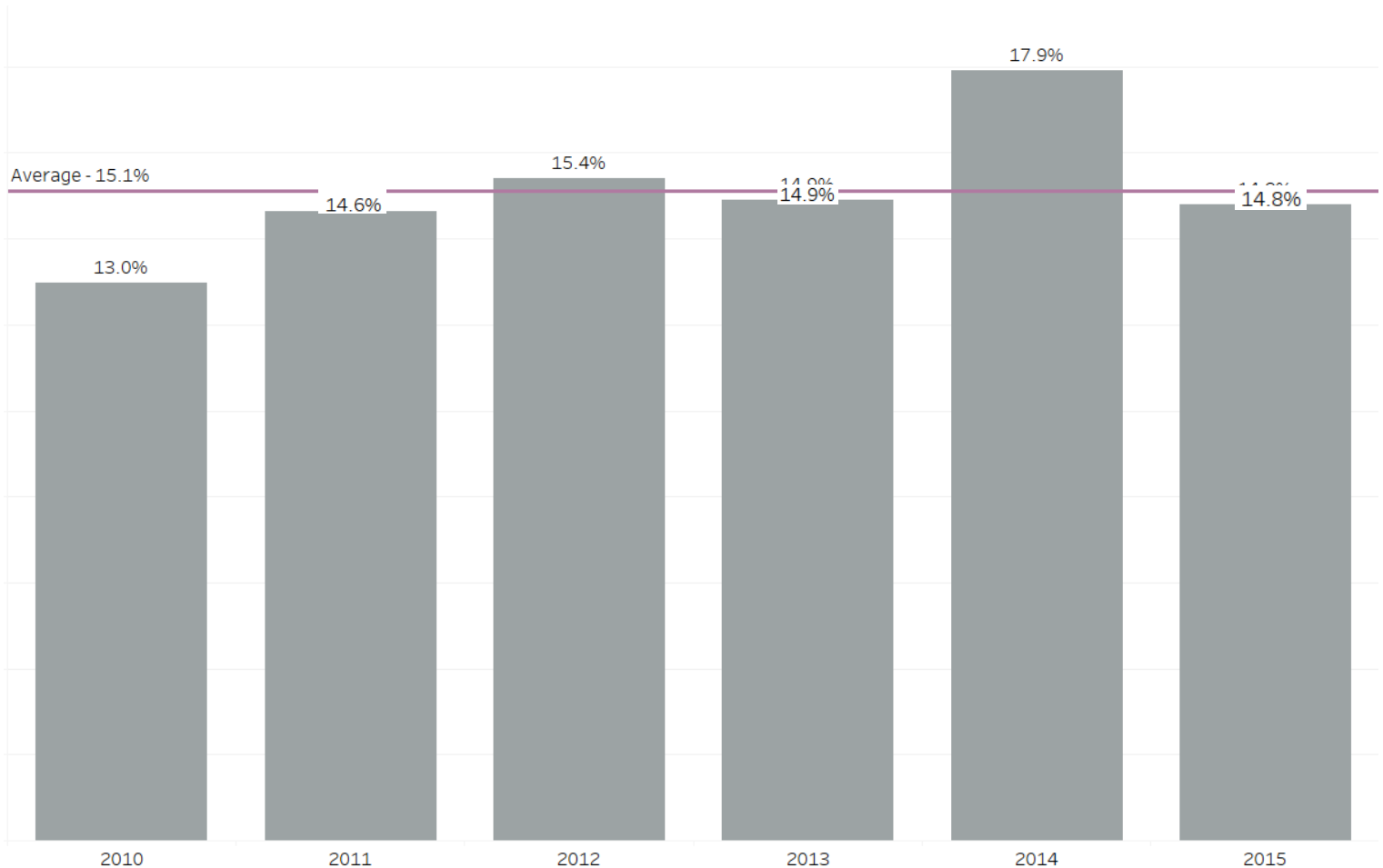
### Probation Release

The chart below represents all probation releases from a MDOC facility between 2010 and 2015, grouped by Release Year.

MDOC post release RCR:

- 2010 Release Year – One year RCR – 13%
- 2011 Release Year – One year RCR – 14.6%
- 2012 Release Year – One year RCR – 15.4%
- 2013 Release Year – One year RCR – 14.9%
- 2014 Release Year – One year RCR – 17.9%
- 2015 Release Year – One year RCR – 14.8%

On average 15.1% of the inmates released to probation from 2010-2015 returned to an MDOC facility within one year of their release. 2014 releases experienced the highest RCR with 17.9% returning to an MDOC facility within one year of their release.





## Maine Department of Corrections 2010-2015 Post Release

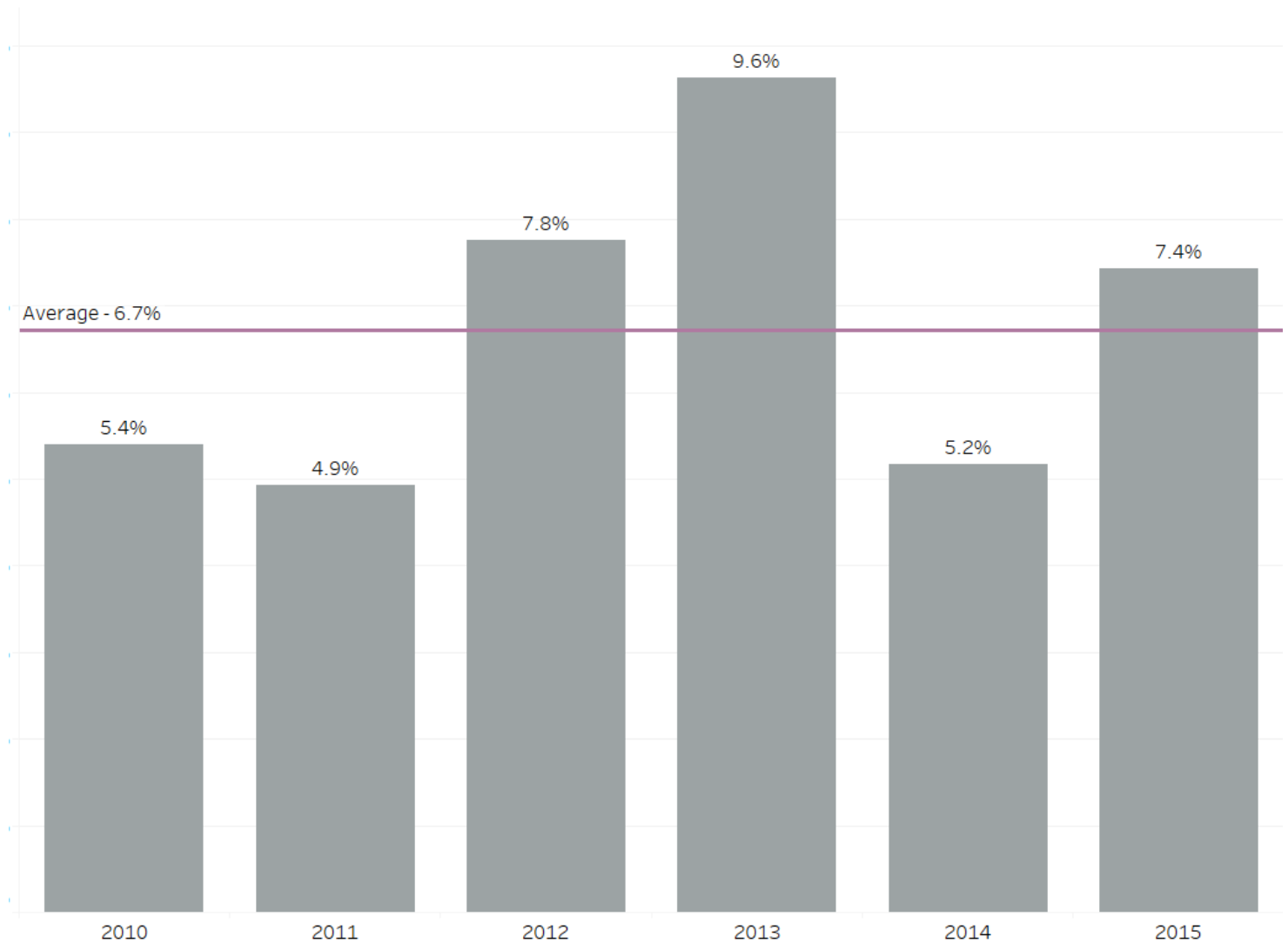
### Straight Release

The chart below represents all straight releases from a MDOC facility between 2010 and 2015, grouped by Release Year.

MDOC post release RCR:

- 2010 Release Year – One year RCR – 5.4%
- 2011 Release Year – One year RCR – 4.9%
- 2012 Release Year – One year RCR – 7.8%
- 2013 Release Year – One year RCR – 9.6%
- 2014 Release Year – One year RCR – 5.2%
- 2015 Release Year – One year RCR – 7.4%

On average 6.7% of straight releases from 2010-2015 returned to an MDOC facility within one year of their release.





## Maine Department of Corrections 2010-2015 Post Release

### Return to Custody by Gender

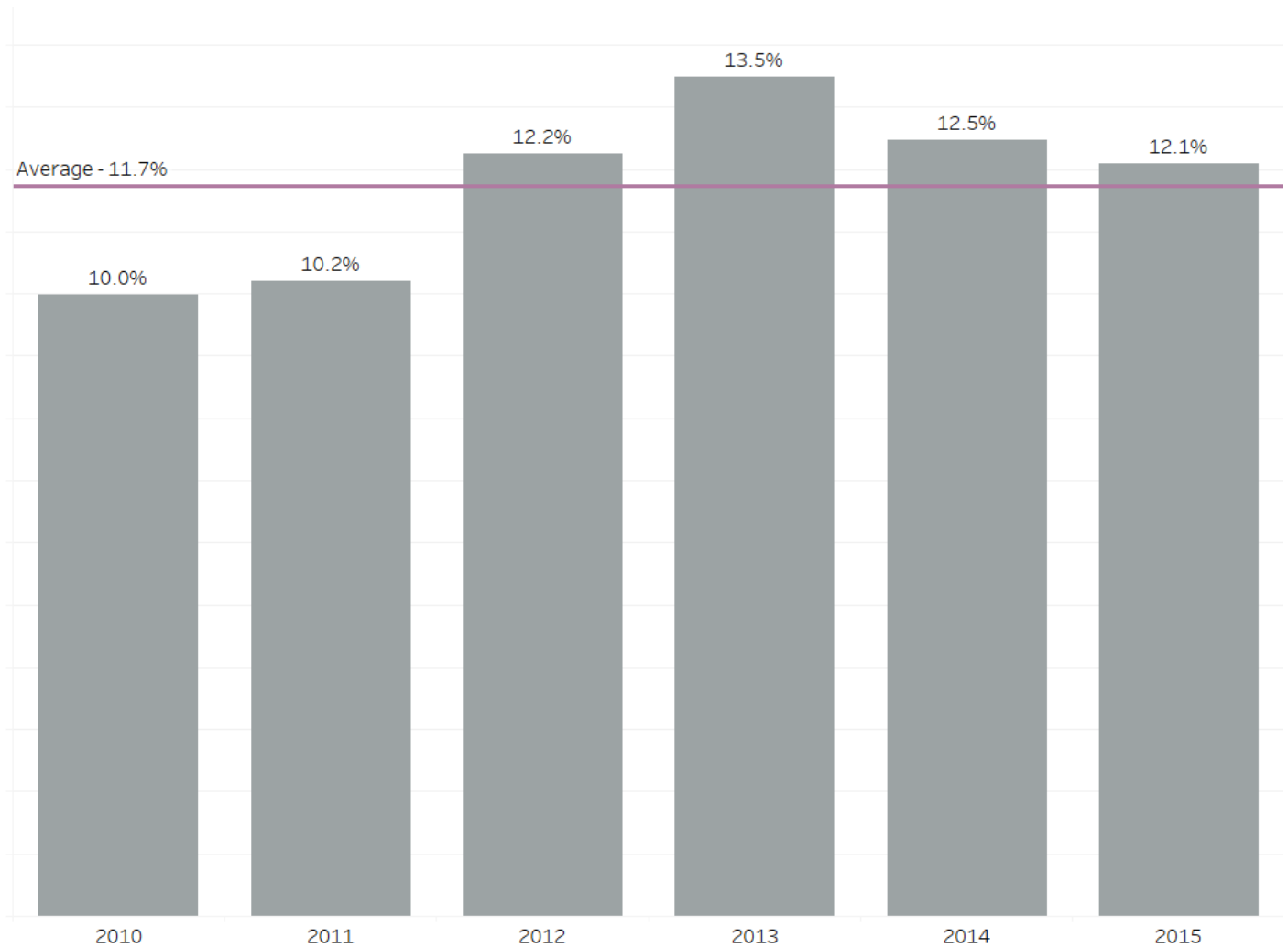
The follow charts represent all releases from a MDOC facility (Probation and Straight Release) between 2010 and 2015, grouped by Gender and Release Year.

#### Male Release

MDOC Post Release RCR:

- 2010 Release Year – One year RCR – 10%
- 2011 Release Year – One year RCR – 10.2%
- 2012 Release Year – One year RCR – 12.2%
- 2013 Release Year – One year RCR – 13.5%
- 2014 Release Year – One year RCR – 12.5%
- 2015 Release Year – One year RCR – 12.1%

On average 11.7% of the male inmates released between 2010-2015 returned to an MDOC facility within one year of their release. 2013 releases experienced the highest RCR with 13.5% of them returning within one year of release.





## Maine Department of Corrections 2010-2015 Post Release

### Female Release

#### MDOC Post Release RCR

- 2010 Release Year – One year RCR – 5.4%
- 2011 Release Year – One year RCR – 7.3%
- 2012 Release Year – One year RCR – 6.5%
- 2013 Release Year – One year RCR – 3.2%
- 2014 Release Year – One year RCR – 8.0%
- 2015 Release Year – One year RCR – 5.7%

On average 6% of the female inmates released between 2010-2015 returned to an MDOC facility within one year of their release.





## Maine Department of Corrections 2010-2015 Post Release

### Return to Custody by Release Custody Level

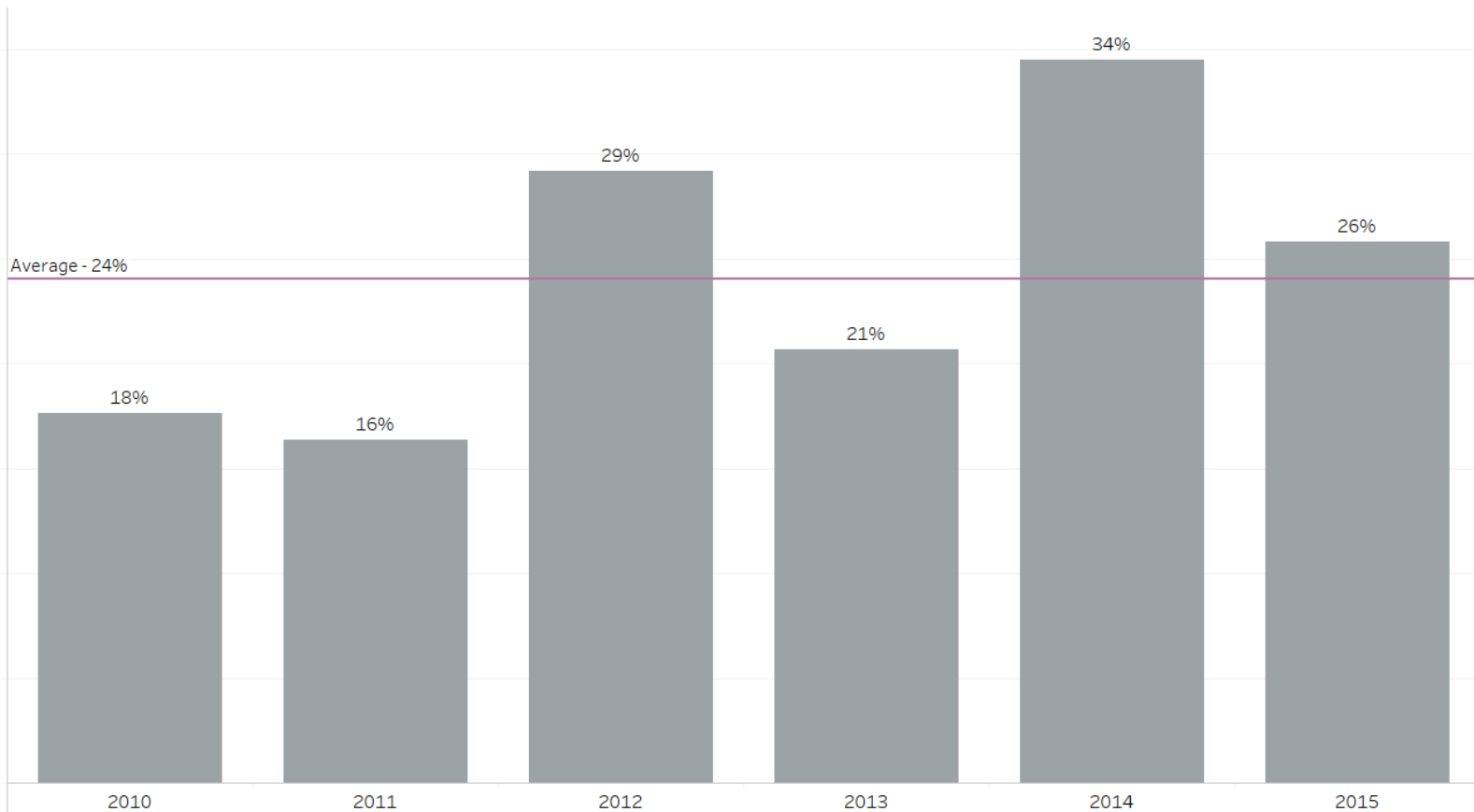
The following charts represent all releases from a MDOC facility (Probation and Straight Release) between 2010 and 2015, grouped by Custody Level at Release and Release Year.

#### Close Custody Release

Close Custody Post Release RCR:

- 2010 Release Year – One year RCR – 18%
- 2011 Release Year – One year RCR – 16%
- 2012 Release Year – One year RCR – 29%
- 2013 Release Year – One year RCR – 21%
- 2014 Release Year – One year RCR – 34%
- 2015 Release Year – One year RCR – 26%

On average 24% of the inmates released from close custody between 2010-2015 returned to an MDOC facility within one year of their release.





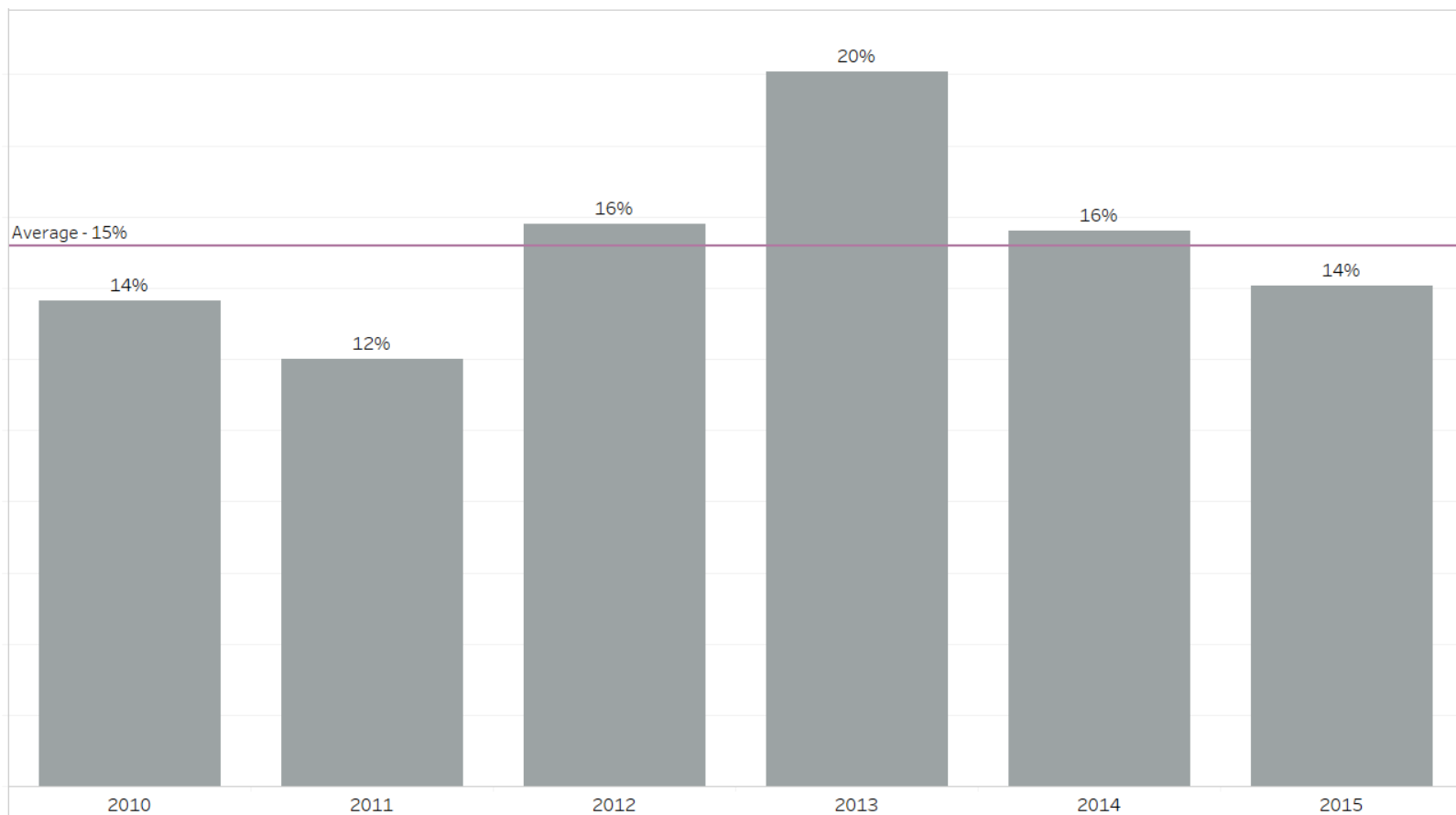
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### Medium Custody Release

#### Medium Custody Post Release RCR

- 2010 Release Year – One year RCR – 14%
- 2011 Release Year – One year RCR – 12%
- 2012 Release Year – One year RCR – 16%
- 2013 Release Year – One year RCR – 20%
- 2014 Release Year – One year RCR – 16%
- 2015 Release Year – One year RCR – 14%

On average 15% of the inmates released from medium custody between 2010 and 2015 returned to an MDOC facility within one year of their release.





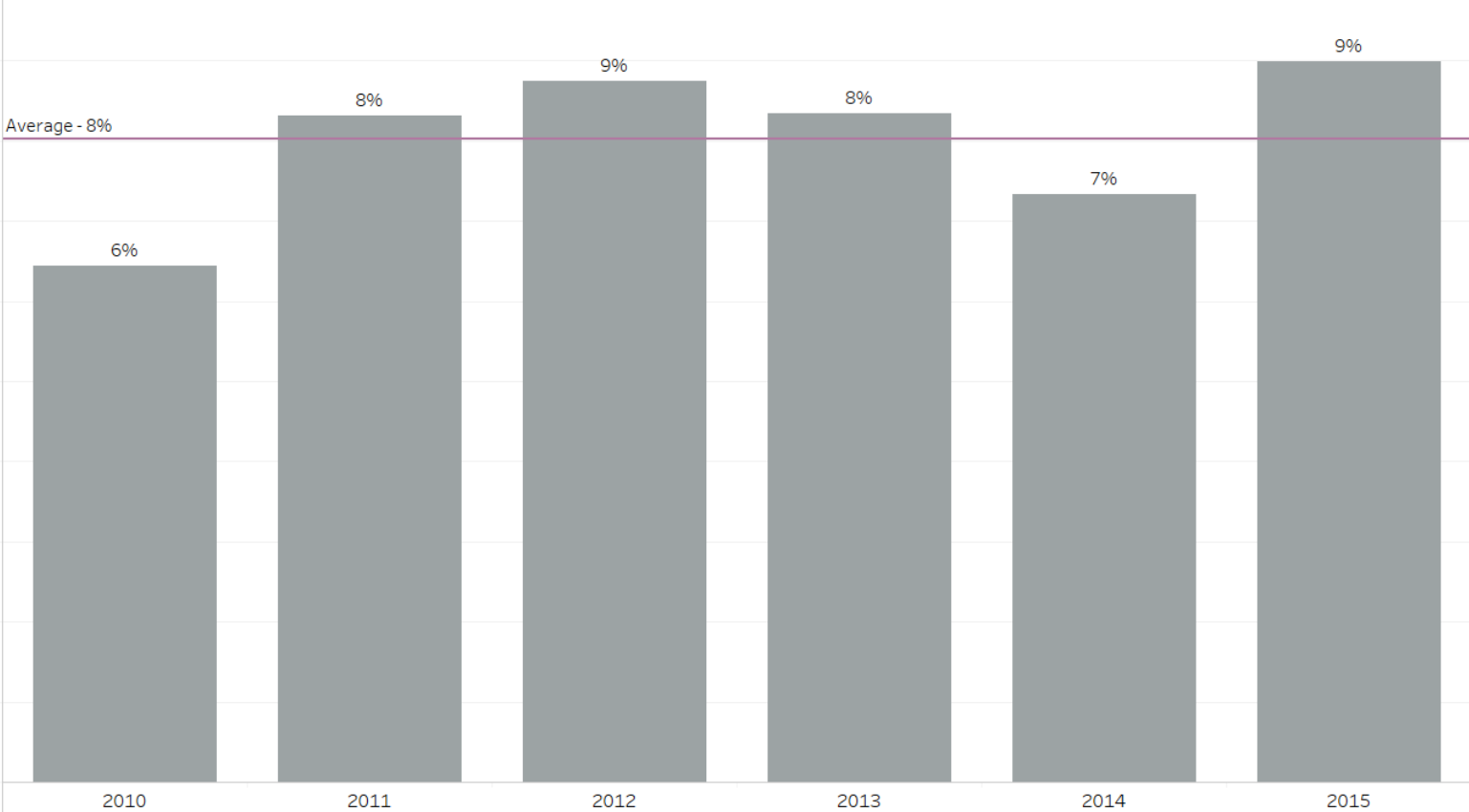
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## Minimum & Community Custody Release

### Minimum & Community Custody Post Release RCR

- 2010 Release Year – One year RCR – 6%
- 2011 Release Year – One year RCR – 8%
- 2012 Release Year – One year RCR – 9%
- 2013 Release Year – One year RCR – 8%
- 2014 Release Year – One year RCR – 7%
- 2015 Release Year – One year RCR – 9%

On average 8% of the inmates released from Minimum & Community custody between 2010 and 2015 returned to an MDOC facility within one year of their release.



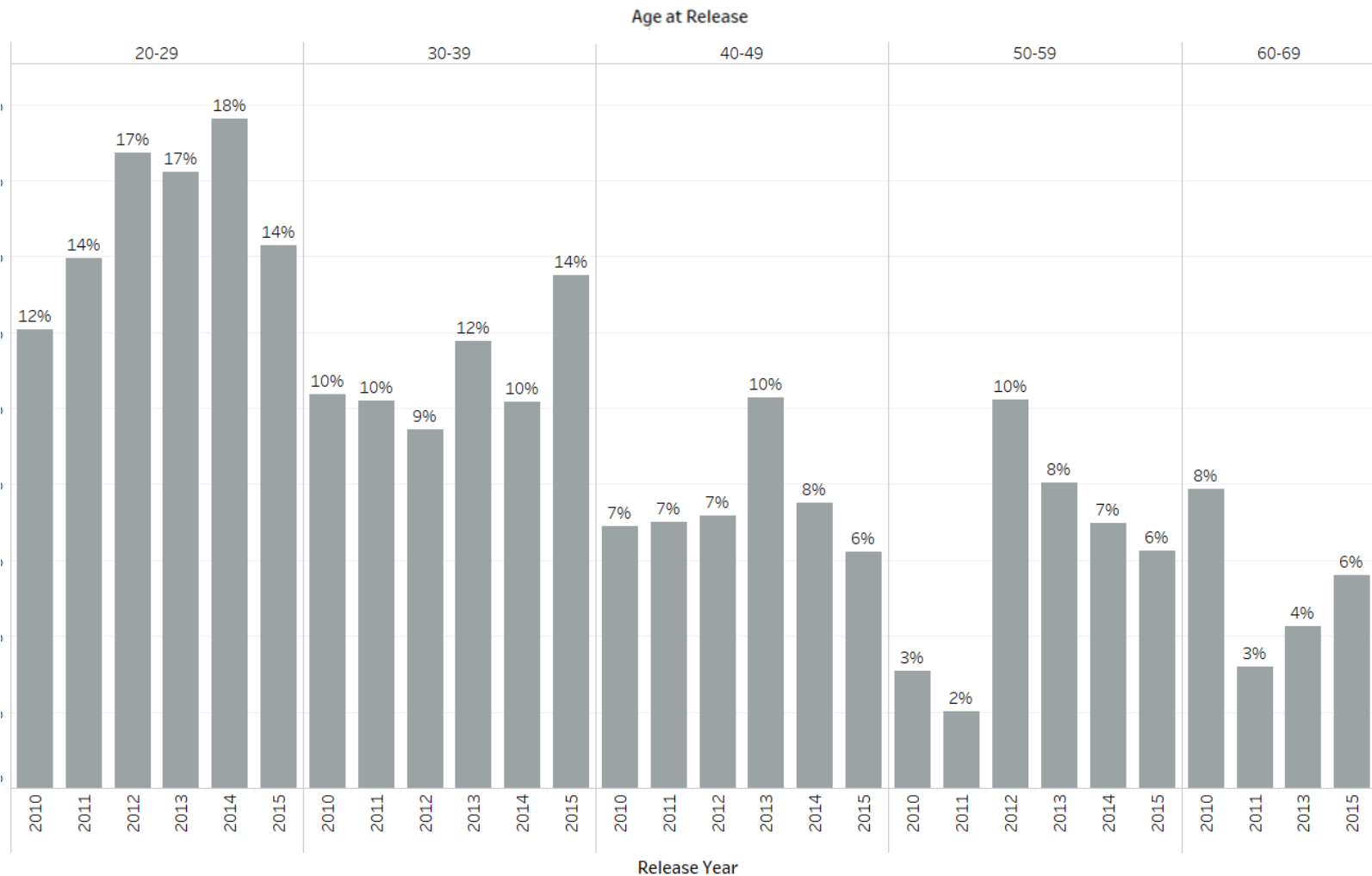


## Maine Department of Corrections 2010-2015 Post Release

### Return to Custody by Age at Release

The chart below represents all releases from a MDOC facility (Probation and Straight Release) between 2010 and 2015, grouped by Release Year & Age at Release.

- Inmates released between the ages of 20-29 years have the highest RCR within the first year after release.
  - The next highest return to custody age group is 30-39 year olds.
- These same patterns are seen if you look at Male and Female releases individually.





## **Maine Department of Corrections 2010-2015 Post Release**

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### **Conclusion**

The analyzed one year post release data revealed a steady RCR increase from 2010 to 2013 (from baseline of 9.6 up to a peak of 12.4 in 2013). During calendar year 2014, significant Maine Department of Corrections leadership and other programmatic changes were introduced. One year post release data from 2014 and 2015 show the beginning of a trending down of the RCR. 2016 data will be available for analysis in January 2018.

Following January 2018, this report will be updated to include the 2016 RCR data to determine if the expected RCR downward trend is substantiated.

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The mission of the Department of Corrections is to reduce the likelihood that juvenile and adult offenders will re-offend, by providing practices, programs and services which are evidence-based and which hold the offenders accountable.